

If, therefore, you are not already enthused regarding the numerous attractions at the San Diego meetings, and decisive as to your own attendance, scan the programs in this issue, and ask yourself if you can really afford to stay away?

MEMBERS OF C. M. A. STANDING COMMITTEES TO MEET AT CORONADO: IMPORTANT THAT ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS SHOULD ATTEND THE CONFERENCES

History of the Present Constitution and By-Laws of the California Medical Association.—The present constitution with by-laws of the California Medical Association, after a four-year controversial career in their forming, were adopted by the House of Delegates at the San Diego annual session of 1929. The final form, approved without a single dissenting vote, was based on the draft prepared by a special committee appointed in December, 1926, by Council Chairman O. D. Hamlin. Both the previous constitution and by-laws, and the first draft of the proposed revision as presented by the special committee, were printed on pages 244-258, in the *CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE* of August, 1927.

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The Provision for "Standing Committees."—The special committee on revision of by-laws, in its transmittal letter to the Council of March 30, 1927 (given on page 248 of the *JOURNAL* for August, 1927), stated that, "In an association as large as that of California, it is very necessary that a practical, centralized, elastic method of organization shall exist, if best results are to be attained"; and in the proposed revision this thought was constantly kept in mind.

Hence, one of the important inclusions in the first draft of the by-laws, adopted in 1929, was contained in "Chapter VII—Committees," and provided for "standing" committees; the previous constitution and by-laws containing no stipulations concerning committees, other than the executive and program committees.

The special committee felt that a group of standing committees, of sufficient number and nature to cover practically all major activities that might come up in organized or scientific medicine, could be of great aid in the further development of the California Medical Association, by making it possible to carry out, in harmonious and efficient manner, those policies to which the House of Delegates of the Association had given its sanction. Through the elimination of a large number of previously existing special committees, that "came and went," the succeeding years have demonstrated the value of the proposed changes; even though the end-results have fallen considerably short of what was hoped could be attained.

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California's Size a Drawback to Committee Conferences.—If California were a state of lesser geographical area than is contained in its almost imperial domain covering a length of 800 miles and a breadth of 200 miles, the members of

the standing committees would have been able to work to much better advantage than has been the case. In short, because of the great distances to be covered by members of a committee, it has been almost impossible to secure meetings; and the Association was not in position to pay the railroad and other expenses involved by having the members of the fifteen standing committees meet with one another once or more yearly, to plan and carry on their work as outlined in the by-laws.

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At San Diego, on March 24, Conferences of Standing Committees Will Be Held.—To overcome these disadvantages, it was proposed, at the March 7 meeting of the Executive Committee, that the Association make an effort to bring together the members of the standing committees for preliminary conference at San Diego, on Sunday, May 24. Association Secretary Warnshuis will send to all members of standing committees additional information concerning the plans. The secretary's minutes of the Executive Committee action read as follows:

"Editor Kress presented a recommendation that the Secretary arrange for a conference of chairmen and committeemen of all standing committees and special committees, for the purpose of becoming more intimately acquainted with the problems of the Association, and for the purpose of making recommendations (on Sunday, May 24, 1936, at Coronado, at 2 p. m.); and that the President and the Secretary be in charge of this Conference; and that notice be sent to the chairmen and members of each committee urging their attendance; and that the Council appropriate a reasonable sum to defray the hotel expense for one extra day for those attending this conference. Carried."

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Every Member of a Standing Committee Should Be at Coronado on May 24.—It goes without saying, therefore, that members of standing committees should show their interest in the Association's work, and a recognition of their responsibilities as committeemen, by being present at this year's first annual session. With the conference meeting on Sunday (for a preliminary discussion of their problems), and contacts and exchange of views on succeeding days, it should be possible for the members of each and every committee to allocate among themselves their duties, so that active studies and work may be energetically carried on during the coming year. If the program materializes as the Council of the Association hopes, the reports of next year's annual session will show real progress in committee work.

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JOSEPH POMEROY WIDNEY, A.M., M.D., D.D., LL.D., FOUNDER OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION; WHO, AT THE AGE OF 95, STILL CARRIES ON

A Biographical Sketch of Special Interest to California Physicians.—In referring to the absorbing sketch of Joseph Pomeroy Widney, M. D., founder of the Los Angeles County Medical Association, printed in the *Lure of Medical History* department, on page 292, two thoughts come to our mind:

First, whether there is in the United States a single medical society, which today has living, at the ripe age of ninety-five, a founder, who is still active at work as an author—with one book added to his list during the last year, and another soon coming from the press; and,

Secondly, whether, among the hundreds of county medical societies in the United States, there is still another able to present, as its founder, a member of the medical profession, who, in seventy years of strenuous work after leaving medical college, has come to have to his credit so unusual a record of professional and civic service such as can be claimed by Doctor Widney.

Through affiliation with the medical school founded by Doctor Widney, it has long been the privilege of the editor to be quite aware of this colleague's place in the medical life of Southern California; and on more occasions than one, he has seriously reproached himself for not having secured some of the valuable historical information concerning medical events of former days, which only Doctor Widney could impart. It is, therefore, a real satisfaction to be able to present, in this issue, the first part of Doctor Widney's life story, compiled by friends, after a recent interview.

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Doctor Widney's Many Services to Profession and State.—The record of Doctor Widney's broad vision and achievements makes a fascinating story, even though briefly outlined, from a perusal of which every member of the California Medical Association may truly profit, as one always does in contemplating any life of such consistent service to both fellows and race.

Certainly every member of the Los Angeles County Medical Association should read the story of this colleague who brought that organization into existence, and who, in thus adding one more to a large list of honors, has doubly honored the Association as its founder-sponsor: a physician who received his medical degree in California as long ago as 1866, and whose subsequent life career has been so full and fruitful that even in California, where all things seem possible, it stands out, in what one may well term "conspicuous and splendid isolation."

The members of the California Medical Association, then, extend their greetings and good wishes to Dr. Joseph Pomeroy Widney, a still-surviving colleague who, in these last seventy years, has served so faithfully and also greatly honored his profession. Our heartfelt wish to him: That his days, still ahead, may be as full of meaning and joyful service as those of the eventful years gone by!

BASIC SCIENCE LAW OF STATE OF WASHINGTON: INTERESTING STATE SUPREME COURT DECISION

Purpose of Qualifying Certificate (Basic Science) Laws.—Nine years ago, on page 525 of the October, 1927, issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE, appeared the first of a series

of editorial discussions on so-called basic science laws, in each of which was emphasized the value of such legal enactments as a means of protecting the public health by providing mandatory legal provisions whereby healing-art practitioners, before being licensed to practice, should also be required to give evidence that they possess, in addition to purely professional attainments, adequate knowledge of certain basic or fundamental sciences.

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The First Basic Science Laws of the United States.—Attention was called to the first law of this nature, that of Wisconsin, which was enacted on June 12, 1925, and of a similar act passed by the State of Connecticut, which became operative some seventeen days later. Included in the group of seven other commonwealths which have passed such laws since 1925, is the State of Washington; and it is concerning a recent decision by the Supreme Court of that state that the comments below are made.

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Washington Supreme Court Rules that Chiropractors Cannot Claim Basic Science Act Exemption.—The action at issue, which recently came before the Supreme Court of the State of Washington, was on an appeal from the King County Superior Court, wherein a chiropractor, not licensed as such in Washington (and not eligible to chiropractic licensure, unless previously qualified through a basic science certificate), claimed, among other contentions, that to require him

"... to pass an examination in subjects [those of basic science: anatomy, physiology, chemistry, pathology, and hygiene], which have no relation whatever to the functions of chiropractic healing, would be a denial of liberty and of due process of law and, therefore, unconstitutional and void."

The opinion of the Supreme Court stated:

"... it cannot be doubted that no one has a natural or absolute right to practice medicine or surgery, and that the state may, under its police power, regulate within reasonable bounds, for the protection of the public health, the practice of medicine and surgery by defining the qualifications one must possess before being licensed to practice the same; and that a chiropractor is deprived of no constitutional right by being required, before receiving a certificate to practice his profession, to have adequate knowledge of the subjects laid down by the statutes of this state."

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Opinion of the Washington Supreme Court Is Printed in This Issue.—The full opinion of the court appears on page 349 of this number. Because a qualifying certificate (basic science) law has been advocated for California, the decision of the Supreme Court of Washington is of importance. It is to be hoped, therefore, that members of the profession in California who are in doubt concerning the need of such legislation will take the time to read this recent opinion. The proposed California qualifying certificate, as discussed at the recent conference of state officers and county society secretaries, was commented on in last month's issue of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE.